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## A Really Frightening Thought

Looking back at last week's pitiful invasion fiasco in Cuba, it is disheartening enough to know that the U. S. government had a hand in preparing it.

But it is positively frightening to conclude — and there is no other conclusion possible — that our intelligence people actually thought this half-baked venture had a chance to succeed. The U. S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), it now seems, was 100 per cent wrong in its estimate of the invasion strength and of the Castro defenses as well.

This so-called invasion was not something whipped up in a few weeks after John Kennedy became President.

The planning and training, whatever there was, had begun months ago under the Eisenhower Administration; the force had been held in check because it obviously was not ready to do the job.

Candidate Kennedy was informed of the venture and its status during the campaign. He and his experts followed its course from then on, and had every chance to drop the effort, to expand it to a realistic state of readiness, or to keep it on ice, after he took office.

As it turns out, the invasion effort was completely uncoordinated, unprepared, and disastrously small.

No more than 500 or 600 men

landed, and this without air cover or naval support. They came ashore in a swamp, and the anti-Castro underground in Cuba knew less about the time and place of landings than did Castro's spies. The result was swift and complete failure, something which any ROTC freshman could have predicted.

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So now the story is out, and President Kennedy has assumed sole responsibility for the failure.

The President's speech last week, in which he pledged continued support to the cause of freedom in Cuba and the entire hemisphere, was good as far as it went. So were his talks with former President Eisenhower, Mr. Nixon, and Republican leaders in Congress.

But the fact is that this is an unmitigated political (and military) disaster. The U. S. could have taken one black eye, for backing military intervention in Cuba, if it had won. Now it is hated for intervention — and despised for failure.

The thought that must haunt most Americans, though, is this: If the CIA can be so wrong about our strength and the opposition's on territory 90 miles from Key West, how far shall we trust its estimates of the situation in Laos, Red China, or Berlin?